

Martin J. O'Malley
Governor

Gloria Lawlah
Secretary



Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

DEPARTMENT OF AGING
Choice, Independence and Dignity for Older Marylanders

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Wesley Wood
410-767-1100

Department of Aging to Host Elder Abuse Forum at Baltimore Senior Center

BALTIMORE, Maryland (June 11, 2013) – On Wednesday, June 12, 2013, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, the Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA) will host the latest installment of the Waxter Wisdom, a free monthly forum designed to inform professionals and empower older Marylanders and individuals with disabilities. The series is sponsored by Waxter Senior Center in Mount Vernon with the help of host organizations who develop topical content. Wednesday's forum is entitled, ***"Elder Abuse: Preventing and Protecting Our Elderly and Vulnerable Adults."*** Speakers include Baltimore City State's Attorney Gregg L. Bernstein, Maryland's Long Term Care Ombudsman, and Baltimore City's top Economic Crimes prosecutor. More than 200 professionals and consumers are expected to attend.

"We look forward to bringing heightened attention to elder abuse, exploitation and neglect of older adults, because awareness is the first step to preventing these insidious acts," said Gloria Lawlah, Secretary of the Department of Aging. *"The more information we can get out to our professionals and the community, the better we can protect our most vulnerable elders."*

More than 8,000 cases involving elder abuse are reported in the state of Maryland each year. Elder abuse most often takes place in the home with most victims being dependent on their abuser for basic needs. The four most common forms are physical abuse, psychological and emotional, financial exploitation and self neglect. Older adults who have been abused have a 300 percent higher risk of death when compared to those who are not abused. Experts believe that for every elder abuse case reported as many as five go unreported.

The Waxter Wisdom forum is timely, as the federal Administration on Aging (AoA) is sponsoring the Year of Elder Abuse Prevention (YEAP) to encourage national, state, and local organizations to protect seniors and raise awareness about this important issue. Nations will join together on June 15, 2013 for World Abuse Awareness Day to focus global attention on the problem.

The Maryland Department of Aging, in partnership with local Area Agencies on Aging, provides leadership and advocacy for older Marylanders and their families through information, education, programs, and services that promote and enhance choice, independence and dignity. For updated information, visit the Maryland Department of Aging's website at www.aging.maryland.gov. and [www.Facebook.com/MarylandDepartmentofAging](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandDepartmentofAging).